Daily Report
Latin America

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CSP Seeks South Atlantic Peace Zone

PY151116 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2336 GMT 14 Dec 87

[Text] Sao Paulo, 14 Dec (EFE)—It was reported here today that the South American Peace Commission (CSP), which is comprised of influential politicians, union leaders and businessmen, is going to attempt in the next few months to make the South Atlantic a zone of world peace.

During a meeting in Sao Paulo last week, the CSP Executive Committee approved a document stating the CSP will try to free Latin America from the influence of the nuclear arsenals of the superpowers. The commission also called on the South American people to strengthen their systems of cooperation and to adopt measures to maintain regional security.

Attending the meeting were former presidents of Bolivia and Venezuela, Lydia Gueiler Tejada and Carlos Andres Perez, respectively, and former foreign ministers of Brazil and Bolivia Olavo Setubal and Gustavo Fernandez, respectively. In addition, several South American congressmen attended the meeting.

The CSP also studied a new policy on Latin American security to replace the "National Security Doctrine" which was revealed with the stand the U.S. Goverment took during the Malvinas Islands war between Argentina and Great Britain.

Carlos Andres Perez today said "the South American countries must implement a policy of regional security." He added that while the superpowers are concerned about security and keeping their zones of influence, the South American countries live in total insecurity as a result of their serious socioeconomic crisis.

The CSP document expresses support "for the Argentine sovereign rights over the Malvinas Islands" and warns that the military base in that zone is a nuclear threat for South America. The document adds South America must avoid militarization, an arms race in the South Atlantic, and the presence of foreign military bases. It adds the region must also prevent the great powers from introducing nuclear weapons in the region.

The document calls on the South American countries to expand their nuclear energy cooperation programs for exclusive peaceful means.

The CSP, which was created in Buenos Aires this year, is made up of important South American personalities such as Nobel Peace Prize winner Adolfo Perez Esquivel, Colombian writer Gabriel Garcia Marquez and former presidents, congressmen, and union leaders.

The CSP officials reported another meeting will be held late in May 1988 in Montevideo where a public document on regional democratic security will be released.

Parliamentary Assembly on Debt Convenes

PY142346 Brasilia Domestic Service in Portuguese 2100 GMT 14 Dec 87

[Text] Brazilian Finance Minister Bresser Pereira today attended the opening session of the Latin American Parliamentary Assembly on the Foreign Debt, which was held at the Federal Senate building. Bresser said the political treatment given the debt issue has not yielded significant results. He advocated the political unity of Latin American countries on the issue, but without compelling all countries to adopt the same negotiating strategy. He said the document signed in Mexico by the presidents of the Group of Eight countries is the first step toward the achievement of this unity. He explained the solution of the foreign debt problem depends on the reduction of the interest and of the debt itself, rather than merely on the reduction of payments on the debt to a percentage of export income, as was done by Peru.

Foreign Minister Abreu Sodre, who also attended the session, said it is very difficult to adopt a common position toward foreign debt negotiations, because each Latin American country has its own features, its own specific debts, and its own negotiations. Abreu Sodre said Latin America must adopt a single position toward the problems common to all the countries of the continent.

Brazilian Congress President Senator Humberto Lucena said Latin American countries must adopt a single position toward the creditors, because only in this way will debtor countries manage to create the proper conditions for more just negotiations, without unbearable burdens for the economy.

Cuba

Risquet Meets With Palestinian Official

FL151459 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Text] Jorge Risquet, PCC Politburo member, received in Havana (?Muf'im Bazlamit), chairman of the committee for the exercise of inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. The meeting is taking place within the framework of the UN's Latin American seminar on the Palestinian question which begins in Havana today.

Malmierca Opens Seminar on Palestine Question

FL152030 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Text] Isidoro Malmierca, Cuban minister of foreign relations, gave the opening speech at the 18th regional seminar for Latin America on the Palestinian question which began today in Havana. Malmierca said during his opening remarks that Cuba has been, is, and will always be a sister in the struggle and combat of the Palestinian people.

[Begin Malmierca recording] These 20 years of victories and setbacks, efforts and sacrifices, constant military struggle, worldwide endeavors, internal difficulties, and permanent confrontation of actions by the strongest imperialist force, the United States of America, and by its policeman, the Zionist state, prove the Palestinian identity cannot be destroyed. [end recording]

In the midst of his speech, the Cuban minister stopped talking to denounce a report shown by CNN on an apparent Israeli invasion in southern Lebanon. The Israeli troops were reported as having advanced up to 13 miles into Lebanese territory where fierce fighting with Palestinian troops was taking place. Of course, this news emphasizes even further the terrible threat that grows over the Palestinian resistance in southern Lebanon, just as Malmierca said at one of the meetings of the Nonaligned Movement. Today this threat is taking on new nuances. It is also a threat against Lebanese sovereignty and an element which increases the concern of the sovereign countries of the world.

Brazilian Governor Meets With Lezcano

FL152005 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Text] Orestes Quercia, governor of the Brazilian state of Sao Paulo, who arrived in our country last night, was received today at the seat of the city's government by Jorge Lezcano, first secretary of the PCC in the capital, and Pedro Chavez, president of the City of Havana Province National Assembly of the Peoples' Government [ANPP]. The visitor and his entourage are planning to tour projects being built by the minibrigade movement and Habana Vieja restoration areas. The Brazilian governor will meet this afternoon with the Cuban foreign minister. In his meeting with major Havana government leaders, Orestes Quercia was given an overview of the work of the City of Havana Province ANPP.

Panamanian People's Party Issues Statement

PA131808 Havana International Service in Spanish 1800 GMT 12 Dec 87

[Text] In a statement issued today, Panama's People's Party recalled the people's campaigns which in December 1974 prevented the permanence of military bases built by the United States during World War II. The document charged that the current anti-Panamanian actions by the United States are aimed at imposing a docile government on the isthmian country, a government that would allow the U.S. military presence after the year 2000.

The declaration urges all democratic, progressive, anti-imperialist parties and organizations of Panama to form a single front against the plans of the United States and the local oligarchy.

Havana PCC Meeting Discusses Construction

FL101645 Havana Television Cubana Network in Spanish 0158 GMT 3 Dec 87

["Highlights" of the Havana Province PCC Assessment Meeting presided over by Commander in Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, president of the Councils of State and Ministers, held at the Palace of Conventions in Havana on 27, 28, 29 November;delegates identified by caption—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Castro] What we—the ministry in this case—want to do, is have the Miguel Enriquez Hospital workers form a contingent like the Blas Roca Contingent. The Blas Roca Contingent is working on a People's Government project. We assigned the People's Government the task of building the freeway. We have decided not to give the MICONS [Ministry of Construction] more work than it already has. Every time a new project comes up, we assign it to the minibrigades. Their human resources are practically unlimited. Furthermore, what we really tried to do was create something that could be emulated. We wanted to awaken the honor and pride of the professional construction workers. We had some groups which were not properly organized, groups that had reached a chaotic point. What we wanted to do was show that the construction of roads in the capital city is very important, not only socially, but also economically. An example of this is that the East-West freeway, or avenue, will help us save much money in fuel as well as time, etcetera.

[Vivencio Gonzalez] As we have said at previous assemblies, and mentioned in our report to this assembly, the industry was not prepared to face the broad program for the construction of social works that began during the latter part of last year. This has been a great challenge for us because we have done all the work without extra

manpower. The only outside help we have received has been three different kinds of Spanish blocks. The rest of the material we produced, and we were able to do this by better organizing the factories, setting up double shifts, and training our workers. Our industry has 72 installations, and 69 of them are working on double shifts. The other installations will be on the double shift program in December.

[Castro] [Words indistinct] you have not mentioned the production of aluminum products.

[Gonzalez] We are producing them.

[Castro] What?

[Gonzalez] They are on the production line. We had to expand...

[Castro interrupts] They are very important because your factory depended on the Lenin Casing Factory for its products. The Lenin Casing Factory began the year with one production line and without spare parts. Today the damaged line has been repaired, a new one set up, and yet another one is being purchased. I have told the minister of the construction materials industry that his ministry is not only responsible for the products it supplies, but also for the products other organizations supply. The Ministry of Construction is also responsible for reporting to us on the kinds of products the SIME [Ministry of the Steelworking Industry] produces; on how the investments made by the SIME are going; and how the other products, produced by other organizations, are going to be distributed.

[Words indistinct] any other organization involved in construction. Other organizations come under the Ministry of Basic Industry [MINBAS]. The production of electrical wires and other products come under the MINBAS. Yet other organizations come under the Ministry of Light Industry. The ministry is responsible for attending all matters related to construction materials. The ministry must warn us when we will have some problems getting the products produced by the MINBAS or SIME. They must warn us when there is a problem or when some kind of investment is necessary here or there. Therefore, if you only worry about your own industries-...[leaves thought incomplete] I don't know how the ministry handles this; it may be at the level of ministers. You should be mainly responsible for supplying the Construction Ministry with all the material they need to cover the needs of the capital city. This is very important, and we should not forget it. We will get nowhere if some industries supply their quota of construction material while others remain behind in their production.

[Arnaldo Diaz] We began the year with a total of 900,000 meters of sand.

[Castro] How many?

[Diaz] A total of 900,000 cubic meters. In October we had approximately 40,000 cubic meters. The truth is we do not have doubts regarding the Havana construction plan and the minibrigade construction plan because we participate in all of them. But we were caught off guard by the new completion goals and the greater demands for sand.

Commander, I think we have an explanation for all that has happened. However, we can do nothing with a pile of documents when what we really need is a pile of sand. I must agree with you when you say it has been our fault. I think all I can do is explain how we feel this problem can be resolved.

I believe with the measures we have adopted—and I still think we were at fault because [words indistinct] we could have called Comrades Pepin, Levy, Homero, Comrade Pedro Ross, or Comrade Lezcano...

[Castro interrupts] Or you could have called on the party through Comrade Lezcano or Comrade Maximo. There were many things you could have done.

For example, Arnaldo, in the 19 November letter you sent to the minister—to the former minister, the change had not been made yet—you stated: Our sand production plan was for 600,000 cubic meters. However, only 57 percent of the plan was fulfilled and 339,400 cubic meters were produced. In January we had 90,000 cubic meters; therefore, we will be supplying the consumers with approximately 419,000 cubic meters. This means that only 63 percent of our year's goal will be fulfilled.

Does this mean that you are not going to fulfill your sand plan, a plan you drafted for the year and which we believe was based on our current situation and on estimates of the demands? What was your 1986 production?

[Diaz] A total of 520,000 cubic meters and 420,000 cubic meters were used.

[Castro] Right. You produced 520,000 cubic meters and 420,000 cubic meters were used. However, in 1987, the year when the demand for the product grows, when we need more sand, our most critical year, you are only going to produce 339,000 cubic meters. You drafted a plan that will only be fulfilled by 57 percent. The truth is that this is very serious. The plan for the year was drafted late in the year and it was a year when we did not have too many hurricanes. It was a normal year as far as the northern winds are concerned. I remember that the northern winds were very strong last year. It has been a normal year except for that small hurricane that passed near us, that mysterious hurricane that no one knows where it went, [laughter] or where it may be.

The fact is that you are going to fulfill your goal by 57 percent. To what degree can the country rely on an enterprise, an institution, or a ministry, that commits itself to produce 600,000 cubic meters of sand and only produces 339,000 cubic meters.

[Delegate] As Arnaldo said, we studied this situation. If we produce only those amounts, we are going to find ourselves having problems with our commercial fund and the social minibrigade's plan. When the plan was studied, figures showed we needed—without including the needs of the minibrigades or the trade union—16,000 cubic meters a month, 192,000 cubic meters a year, for our commercial fund. In order to cover all the needs of the People's Government projects, we need 200,000 cubic meters; and to cover the sand needs of the trade unions and the minibrigades, we need 504,000 cubic meters. All this adds up to 912,000 cubic meters. According to the figures I have heard here today, I see that everything has changed. We had estimated a monthly need for 100,000 cubic meters. What he said about the comrades at the Science Academy...

[Castro interrupts] One hundred thousand meters of what?

[Delegate] Of sand.

[Castro] And where are you going to get that? From Rio de Janeiro? Where?

[Delegate] No, Commander. He did not explain that several suggestions were presented.

[Castro] What we are going to have to do is find a way to substitute sand wherever it can be substituted.

[Delegate] Regarding cement, next year we plan to produce 3.8 million tons of cement. This year...

[Castro] Just to have an idea, please tell me how much was produced in 1986 and how much in 1987.

[Delegate] In 1986 we produced 3.3 million tons. This year's plan was for 3,290,000 tons; we increased it by 100,000 tons, and we are currently suggesting the production of another 150,000 tons.

[Castro] How many tons will be produced this year?

[Delegate] A total of 3.5 million tons.

[Castro] A total of 3.5 million tons.

[Delegate] This year's construction plan is backed by 3,290,000 tons.

[Castro] Are you exporting? You are backing this year's construction plan with 3.2 million...

[Delegate interrupts] With 3,290,000 tons. We agreed to produce more cement for two reasons: for next year's housing and social works projects and to start January with a surplus.

[Delegate] I want to talk about value and volume. Six months ago we started drafting the 1988 plan. According to that plan, the 1988 volume will be [words indistinct] real value. We explained how at Antillana de Acero we were selling a ton of steel for 1,200 pesos; however, this year we are selling the same ton for 580 pesos. This is the result of a price adjustment policy. We were selling our conductors at 2.23 [pesos] a kilo, whereas this year, we sold them at 23 centavos. I don't think this year's plan should be based on value. I think that it should be based on volume. This year we are going to be mixing 6,000 meters of concrete more than we did last year and we are producing...

[Castro] How many?

[Delegate] Six thousand meters. We have also increased our reinforced concrete production by 5,000 tons; however, we are selling all this at a lower price because of the new price adjustment policy.

[Castro] When was this price adjustment implemented?

[Delegate] The prices were adjusted because we surpassed our maximum production capacity but cannot reach our value goal.

[Castro] How could you if all the prices were lowered? When was this decision adopted?

[Delegate] In July.

[Castro] Was this your decision or did the ministry decide this?

[Delegate] We both did. It was the result of a study that...

[Castro interrupts] Well, the rules must have been changed. Now we don't know whether we are producing more or less. We are seeing that we are making, in value, less than in 1986 even though we are using up more steel, cement, and other things. That is crazy.

Just to get an idea of all this, why were you selling the cubic [meter] of concrete for 1,200 pesos?

[Delegate] Not concrete, that was the price of a ton of steel. We had the same problem with the crane-lifted concrete [hormigon con grua]. We were selling it at 43 pesos a cubic meter, but this year, because of the price adjustment decided by the price directorate, we are selling it at 34 pesos. But I would like to give you...

[Castro interrupts] But those 1,200 pesos and 580 pesos you mentioned earlier?

[Delegate] Those were the prices for a ton of steel products.

[Castro] For the ton. Why was it being sold at 1,200 pesos?

[Delegate] That was the established selling price.

[Castro] Why was that selling price established?

[Delegate] It is the base price established by the SPU [expansion unknown]. [Castro] To steal, to make a profit, to distribute awards. Why was it so expensive? How much does it cost you to produce a ton of steel?

[Delegate] The construction enterprises take their prices for those established by the Price Directorate. It is based on a budget; however, that budget system is obsolete and is being revised. Up to now, the revision has only served to establish there can be a price adjustment. Prices are being revised and that is our selling price. I would also like to add that...

[Castro] Yes, yes; but you still haven't answered my question. How much does it cost you to produce that ton of steel products?

[Delegate] The price of the ton of steel products...

[Castro interrupts] I am not asking about its price, I want to know its cost.

[Delegate] The cost...

[Castro interrupts] There seems to be some confusion here. I am asking how much it costs you to produce that ton of steel products not how much you get paid for that ton.

[Delegate] The cost of that ton of steel products is the suppliers cost, plus labor, plus use of the equipment; this gives us the...

[Castro] I wonder if there is a crazy person around here who can understand what you are saying.

[Delegate] I will try and explain it to you.

[Castro] Yes, please. Tell me the cost.

[Delegate] The cost of a ton of steel products is the sum of what we have to pay for the product, plus the wages of the workers who must produce the final product, plus the use of the equipment. The sum of this is our cost for the production of a ton of steel products.

[Castro] Fine, but how much does it cost?

[Delegate] Today it costs 573 pesos.

[Castro] It costs you 573 pesos to produce it and you get paid 580 pesos for the final product?

[Delegate] There is an extra charge placed on these 573 pesos and this adds up to 580 or 585 pesos but the price...

[Castro interrupts] What a mess [words indistinct].

[Delegate] The price depends on the structure and there are two kinds of structures...

[Castro interrupts] This means that when you were selling this product for 1,200 pesos you were actually making a 100 percent profit.

[Delegate] We were reporting a 100 percent profit.

[Castro] Why were you reporting a 100 percent profit?

[Delegate] Because it was the system we had.

[Castro] Why would they want to sell at these prices?

[Delegate] I simply see it as a way things were done. We have been studying this with the Price Directorate...

[Castro] But you were charging a lot for your product. Why?

[Delegate] I agree it was expensive.

[Castro] Only to show a false efficiency; to make a profit; to appear as though you were being profitable; to distribute awards; for all those things. What was the reason for this?

[Delegate] I don' have...

[Castro interrupts] Why were costs increased? If, as you said, the real cost was 573 pesos, why was it sold at 1,200 pesos. Who received those 1,200 pesos?

[Delegate] Those 1,200 pesos were charged by the enterprise that contracted the enterprise to build the structure.

[Castro] When I said they had all turned into shoddy capitalists...[leaves thought incomplete] They were playing at being capitalists but no one really saw through this. Can we now hear from a social minibrigade or someone else?

[Lezcano] I call on the president of People's Government in Mariano [words indistinct]. She knows about this.

[Zita Batista] We have gained our experience from many projects. We have a delegate who heads a minibrigade that begins working at 1600 because the residents of that

block have their responsibilities and they have to work. Since the experience is broad, massive, and educational, we decided to create minibrigades with these characteristics. [passge omitted]

[Castro] How many hours do they work?

[Batista] From 1600 to 2200; when they can, they work until 2300.

[Castro] That minibrigade only works those hours?

[Batista] Yes, Commander.

[Castro] They are all workers?

[Batista] They are residents of the area.

[Castro] And their chief is the area delegate?

[Batista] Not really chief; he encourages the workers and answers their questions. We have a group of four comrades...

[Castro interrupts] He is the political commissar.

[Batista] Yes.

[Castro] And the residents also start working at 1600 or do they start earlier?

[Batista] If there is a retired person, or a housewife—on this block there are not too many, and later I will speak of this...

[Castro] Then the delegate and the group are all volunteers?

[Batista] They are all volunteers. This group does not get paid for their work, and the group that can work during the morning...

[Castro] It is a minibrigade that does not get paid for its work.

[Batista] They don't get paid.

[Castro] If a housewife wants to join a minibrigade she may be assigned to another one?

[Batista] Yes. [passage omitted]

[Lezcano] A representative of the Julio Diaz Contingent, brother of the Blas Roca Contingent, (Fillo) has the floor.

[(Fillo)] Comrades of the presidency, delegates: On the occasion of the assessment assembly, the Julio Diaz Contingent decided to complete the work at the Julio Diaz Hospital. We have expanded the hospital and have added an extra 200 beds. The contingent decided to do this because it was aware of the fact this was necessary and because this was our way to greet the assessment assembly.

Comrade Fidel, the members of the contingent have asked me to inform you, and the government, that the hospital has been completed just as we promised during your 15th visit to the site.

[Castro] You did this in 14 months?

[(Fillo)] You created that contingent on 11 June 1986.

[Castro] And when did you start working?

[(Fillo)] A month later.

[Castro] August, September, October, November. You did it in approximately 16 months. You did it all in 16 months and the quality of the work is also excellent. Could this have been done without that spirit and effort? These were men and women who were not construction workers. This was a contingent mobilized by the party. Now they will stay on on a permanent basis. Perhaps for a few years, 8 or 10 years. Right?

[(Fillo)] For as long as we are needed.

[Castro] What?

[(Fillo)] For as long as we are needed. [applause]

Raul Castro Attends PCC Plenum in Santiago

FL141953 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 14 Dec 87

[Excerpt] Army General Raul Castro Ruz has attended the plenum of the PCC Provincial Committee in Santiago de Cuba where he made brief remarks.

[Begin Raul Castro recording] I believe, as Comrade Vilma [Espin] does, there is a great political and moral spirit among the Santiago de Cuba Province people. I do now want to talk about the other provinces which I have also visited—such as Guantanamo, which is great; Holguin, which we stayed in for several days because of the exercises, etc. I want to specifically refer to Santiago de Cuba Province. I see a great political and moral spirit which is essential for everything; for the economy, development, and even for the essential factor of defense. [end recording]

The FAR minister referred to the need to deal with the housing problem and to find local solutions to the building of construction elements and materials the same way Santiago de Cuba and other eastern provinces have increased their production of electric poles. This effort is fundamental; by the end of the current 5-year

period 90 percent of the territory's houses can have electric power. To accomplish this, it is also necessary to continue building micro- and mini-hydroelectric power plants.

He also termed positive the fact that this city has an asphalt plant. This is a very important material which was formerly brought from Havana. He praised the new system of building reinforced concrete houses in the province. Raul expressed his confidence that the people from Santiago de Cuba will continue making efforts to deserve the honor of hosting the 35th anniversary of the Moncada Barracks attack and the Fourth PCC Congress. [passage omitted]

Continues Provincial Tour

FL142030 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 12 Dec 87

[Text] Army General Raul Castro, second secretary of the PCC Central Committee and FAR minister, has toured Santiago de Cuba and Guantanamo Provinces. This is the 5th day of his visit to the eastern zone.

At the Tio Felipe Youth Labor Army camp in Segundo Frente Municipality, he spent some time with Company No 2, the best in the municipality. It has been a vanguard unit for 6 consecutive months.

Raul explained the measures adopted under the Turquino Plan to increase the standard of living in the mountains, the importance of the EJT [Youth Labor Army] in the coffee industry, and the opportunities for youths to contribute to our country's economy through their own effort.

[Begin Castro recording] You have economic and social importance in developing the mountain region. In addition, from a defensive standpoint, we are converting the mountain areas into strongholds in case of a war. We are working so there is no war. As we have said many times, avoiding war is the same as winning a war. [end recording]

Later, he said they would continue constructing preuniversities and roads in this area. Electrical service will be available everywhere, he added. The mountains of Guantanamo and Santiago de Cuba already have the family doctor program, Castro said.

[Begin Castro recording] We are making an effort so engineers will not have to come from Matanzas, even though they are welcome. That is why we are stressing this to you and to the girls from the valley [words indistinct] a call that was made. They left their communities and the cities and came here to begin this development plan, this coffee harvest plan.

There is a sufficient cultural level in the mountain. I saw the statistics on all those who were first called. You are among those who were first called. Many of you have finished 12th grade [words indistinct] the vocation and willingess without cutting short your length of service for those who want to study and (?without affecting) the commitment to return to the mountains and study for careers that can be used for development of the mountain areas. There are many such careers in the intermediate and higher levels of technology.

In the future, all engineers, family doctors, doctors, hospital doctors, dentists, dentists [repeats himself], radiologists, and leaders representing the cadres, party, mass organizations, and administrators will all come from the mountain area. [end recording]

In Bayate where the command was located for Column 6 of the Second Eastern Front, the FAR minister visited the Juan Manuel Ameijeiras municipal historical museum. He also toured the Comandancia el Aguacate Pioneer explorers' camp, where the first leaders of the rebel forces led by Raul Castro were located.

[Begin Castro recording] [video shows Castro pointing to photograph in exhibit] This photo is the same as the one we saw at the other command center. I'm talking about the column that is west of the base, Column B. This, Ephigenio [no further identification provided] is the column of [name indistinct Pilon], who has died.

This is a sketch I did myself by hand when the front was being organized, when it was a single column called the Pelotones. Later each one became a column. [end recording] In Guantanamo he visited the (Sabanete) Coffee Enterprise, which is part of the Turquino Plan. Enterprise director Francisco Gonzalez, explained its operations.

On their return to Mayari Arriba, they visited the Mausoleum of Martyrs of the Second Front, where they laid roses in memory of the heroic combatants. The visitors spoke briefly at the museum with the most outstanding culture workers in Santiago de Cuba Province. Castro congratulated those workers who had fulfilled 25 years of service in the sector.

Castro was accompanied on the tour by PCC Politburo members Vilma Espin and Esteban Lazo, as well as Politburo alternate member Michel Vargas.

Province Mobilizes on National Defense Day

FL141747 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 6 Dec 87

[Excerpt] The people of Pinar del Rio have once again mobilized on National Defense Day. The residents of the various cities continued to work hard, as they had done throughout the year, to prove the province can aspire to the status of ready for the defense in the second stage. PCC Central Committee Secretary Jaime Crombet visited several areas and talked to the people and to the members of special communications groups.

Also, an antiaircraft artillery group prepared to defend the sacred soil on which our homeland stands. The veterans also participated in this National Defense Day. [passage omitted]

Veiga Closes Public Administration Congress

FL160134 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 16 Dec 87

[Text] The fifth congress of the National Trade Union of Public Administration Workers [SNTAP] has just ended after meeting on Monday and Tuesday in Havana's Lazaro Pena Theater. The meeting was attended by 140 delegates from throughout the country.

The closing remarks were made by Roberto Veiga Menendez, member of the PCC Politburo and secretary general of the CTC [Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions]. Veiga said the new awareness, work spirit, and concepts advancing throughout the country as a result of the rectification process and struggle against negative tendencies were obvious during the congress. He also said during his speech that trade union authority cannot be obtained through a decree or circular. Authority is earned, above all when trade union leaders provide the necessary examples—as has been shown here very clearly—when the correct labor methods are applied; when there are close ties with the trade unions and masses; and when one struggles (?unselfishly) and resolutely.

Haiti

Laymen Express Support for Bishops' Message

FL152316 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil in Creole 1200 GMT 14 Dec 87

[By Jeremie correspondent (Frankel Valentin)]

[Excerpt] This morning we received a note from the committee of Frala, Fraternity of Committed Laymen of Jeremie [Fraternite Laik Angaje nan Jeremie]. Here's what they say:

We members of Frala in Jeremie, upon examining and analyzing the recent events in Haiti, see the Macoutes and the Army want to snatch Dessalines' nation from the hands of all of Dessalines' [Jean Jacques Dessaline, leader of a 1791 slave revolt] true children. They are attacking every sober person and all authentic organizations, everyone and everything that refuses to become corrupt like them. When they aren't attacking the CATH [Autonomous Haitian Workers Central], they are attacking our small peasant farmers. Remember Jean-Rabel, the Grande Anse area, l'Estere, and so forth.

Between 2 and 29 November, innumerable acts of banditry were committed by the military, Macoutes, and certain important foreign powers. The church, one of the (?cornerstones of society), was attacked during those days everywhere and in every way, sometimes with heavy weapons, other times with disinformation. They set fire to rectories, attacked priests, and labeled them all kinds of things. Remember what happened in Petit Goave and in the little town of Le Borgne? They shouted: Down with the small grassroots churches! Still worse, they almost managed to assassinate Father Antoine as he said 6 am mass in the church in Carrefour. They attacked Msgr Romelus. They would like to sully his reputation by means of unfounded accusations. The names of the alleged people who signed those accusations are not even real names.

All this shows us little people clearly that our three biggest enemies are the Macoutes, the military, and the U.S. Government, who have vowed to prevent us from organizing. We have discovered their game. That is why we declare with all our force that Christians must carefully consider the lies being told about church authorities over Namphy's radio and television. No elections are possible under that murderous provisional National Government Council [CNG].

The CEP Namphy has set up is unconstitutional. It cannot organize elections for us. We ask the people to remain mobilized. We support all serious candidates and organizations that refuse to go to elections under the CNG, because they will be mere make-believe elections. We say to them: Persist and don't give up. Victory belongs to us. We support the bishops' latest message. We say to all the victims and their relatives: We are with you. When a part of the body is ill, the entire body suffers. It is true that the struggle is long, but together we will see it through to the end.

The note ends: Long live the church! Down with the CNG! Long live the organization of the masses! Down with macoute elections! Down with all flunky media!

We have also received another, similar, note from the Committed Laymen of the Cathedral of Jeremie setting forth their position. They, too, say they will not go to elections under the Macoute CNG and that all the lies to attack the church over national radio and television stations are invented attempts to discredit the church, which desires the redemption of the Haitian people. The note is signed by several of the faithful in the parish. [passage omitted]

Schools Remain Closed in Capital, Provinces

FL152217 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1145 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Excerpts] Most schools in the capital were closed yesterday. According to our reporters, those that did open had few students. Our correspondents reported a similar situation in several different provincial towns.

In justification of their position, school authorities said there were security problems. In Port-au-Prince, for example, school directors reportedly have received many threats over the telephone and are afraid to endanger the lives of their students.

However, insecurity is allegedly not the only reason for the early shutdown of this first quarter of the academic year. School authorities have allegedly deliberately shut down their schools in a gesture of reproach for the events that took place at the end of November in Haiti. [passage omitted]

Yesterday, however, the big church schools were open, and one of the authorities of Saint Louis de Gonzague School told AFP that these schools came under the authority of the Haitian bishops. He added that Msgr Francois Gayot, president of the Episcopal Conference of Haiti, had expressed, verbally, an opinion against the decision reached by the Haitian Conference of Clergymen, because it penalized the students while the rest of the population went about its normal business. [passage omitted]

Deputy Candidate Views Elections, New CEP

FL151534 Port-au-Prince Radio Nationale in Creole 1400 GMT 14 Dec 87

[Text] In connection with the coming elections in Haiti, there are some candidates who have stopped campaigning and others who say they will run anyway. Still others say they will not run, and have withdrawn their candidacies.

We have a candidate in Thomazeau, Grand Bois area, from the second electoral district of Croix des Bouquets. He is Mr Lamarre Baptiste, who took the opportunity to address the population of the area which he hopes to represent in the Chamber of Deputies. He made his statement after the new Provisional Electoral Council [CEP] was formed. We will listen to Mr Baptiste:

[Begin recording] [Baptiste] People of Thomazeau and Grand Bois. I greet you in the same patriotic vein today...[break in recording] big shock when it suddenly happened on 29 November, the day of the elections, which was your moment, your day of great hope, during which you were truly going to choose a deputy with roots where you live, someone you could trust. You were going to choose a popular president and three senators. You had awakened as early as 0400 or 0500 and set out for the polling stations with joy in your hearts and in a disciplined manner.

Despite everything you had seen and heard, despite all the calamities, you wanted to see your dream become a reality. But it was not to be. Thus today, supporters, voters, my people of Grand Bois and Thomazeau, I ask you, in that same spirit, feeling, and thoughts that you had before the disappointment of 29 November, to remain true to yourselves. Don't work yourselves up. Don't allow yourselves to become angry. Don't be afraid. Don't say you agree with those who did not participate in elections. Don't tear up your electoral card. Don't believe just any old prophetic dream regarding any old lottery number from any old dreamer who doesn't know what he's talking about or who is not a disinterested party. [Allusion to custom of choosing lottery numbers in accordance with signs appearing in dreams believed to be prophetic]

I say to you: Let's not be discouraged. Let's not take any step backward. Instead, let's come even closer together; let's organize even more staunchly. [Sentence indistinct]

[Reporter] Can you tell us, Baptiste, if you will still run for deputy for the Grand Bois/Thomazeau/Croix des Bouquets area?

[Baptiste] If I were to say yes, I would already be violating the trust and hope that the population of the Grand Bois/Thomazeau area has placed in me. Earlier, it was they who said: Lamarre, you are going to represent us in the chamber of deputies. Before I could say yes or no, I would have to consult them. Now I have to go back to them, and after I do, I will answer you.

[Reporter] You know that a new CEP has been formed to organize elections. Many people say they will not participate in elections organized by this new CEP. Many others say that they will run for office anyway. What can you say to us about this new CEP, about their credibility?

[Baptiste] As regards the CEP that was sworn in Saturday, I can't say a lot about them. Even their names are new to me. I don't think I can remember even two of their names. I mean, I don't know them. So I cannot yet say that I will not participate in elections under them. Neither can I say that I will.

But even if I decide not to participate, the CEP should do its job honestly and openly, so we can see if we can save Haiti, considering the moment, considering what is at stake politically, considering the way the country is (?going).

Unknown Assailants Attack Candidate's Home

FL152248 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1700 GMT 14 Dec 87

[Text] The residence of Mr Guy Bauduy, who was minister of commerce and industry under Jean-Claude Duvalier in the late seventies and is an independent candidate for senator of the Department of the Southeast, was machinegunned by a group of armed men on Saturday night [12 December]. The group of unidentified individuals also threw a Molotov cocktail—which failed to explode—at the door of the room in which Mr Bauduy's two young children slept, said Mr Bauduy.

Someone had tried to set fire to the former minister's vehicle recently in Jacmel. AFP recalls that 50-year-old Bauduy had drawn attention to himself by the leftist positions he adopted as a member of the Haitian Government.

Martinique

Haiti's Rene Theodore Attends PCM Congress

FL152238 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1145 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Excerpts] The Ninth Congress of the Martinique Communist Party [PCM] ended Sunday in Fort-de-France with the election of the Central Committee and the extension of the watchword: Democratic and Popular Autonomy from an Independent and Socialist Standpoint. [passage omitted]

Noting the crisis [word indistinct] of the eighth congress in November 1983, when several pro-independence militants left to form the Communist Party for Independence and Socialism, Secretary General Armand Nicolas called on PCM members to strengthen the party. He also called for greater mobilization in the field. [passage omitted]

Haiti was represented at the Ninth PCM Congress by Rene Theodore, secretary general of the Unified Party of Haitian Communists.

CMT Accepts Wage Offer; Strike Averted

FL152338 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1741 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Text] Mexico City, 15 Dec, (NOTIMEX)—The Mexican Congress of Labor [CMT] unanimously has accepted an emergency salary increase of 15 percent for contract workers [contractuales] beginning today and an increase of 20 percent for minimum wages to go into effect next 1 January.

The acceptance of this agreement averts a general strike throughout the country scheduled for 18 December at 1200. Following this morning's private meeting of CMT leaders Fidel Velazquez, president of the CMT and leader of the Confederation of Mexican Workers (CTM), announced the acceptance of the salary increase. It will be formalized this afternoon at the Labor Secretariat in the presence of economic officials of the federal government and top business leaders.

Government Announces New Economic Measures

PA151629 Mexico City XEW Television Network in Spanish 1300 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Text] An official communique issued by the Presidency reported two economic measures: one concerning currency exchange, effective yesterday, and the second on opening markets to foreign trade, effective today.

The first measure was to increase the price of the controlled dollar by 22 percent. The communique noted the measure will stimulate exports and import substitutions because it improves domestic products' competitive position in the international markets.

The exchange measure will be combined with a lowering of import taxes to reduce the cost of foreign purchases. The maximum import tax has been reduced from 40 percent to 20 percent. Other taxes will also be adjusted accordingly. The additional 5-percent import tax has been suspended.

Thus, the import cost for a wide range of products subject to the maximum tax rate will be reduced 25 percent. This percentage is more than the 22-percent increase on the controlled dollar exchange. The official communique adds that in this manner, the effect of currency exchange on prices will be neutralized by the decrease in import taxes.

The communique ends by noting these measures are within the framework of the country's economic program which has been devised jointly by government, workers, farmers, and managerial sectors.

Official Says Drug Trafficking Increased

FL150336 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2106 GMT 14 Dec 87

[Text] Mexico City, 14 Dec (NOTIMEX)—Navy Secretary Admiral Miguel Angel Gomez Ortega said today that even though the Mexican Navy maintains strict vigilance of the coastline to prevent drug trafficking, this problem has increased notably because of the increased international demand for narcotics.

The official called for more severe sanctions against drug traffickers and consumers. Mexican authorities should take new measures in the meantime, he said, against drug traffickers and abuse. This is the only way to eliminate trafficking in and consumption of drugs, which has grown because international demand has increased.

Gomez Ortega reiterated the Navy will continue its frontal attack against drug trafficking since it has qualified personnel to perform the work ordered by Mexican President Miguel de la Madrid.

The Navy Secretary also said the sovereignty and preservation of national maritime resources are completely guaranteed since the ability of maritime and coastal vigilance increased 70 percent between 1982 and the present.

Admiral Gomez Ortega made special mention of the Navy's central installations which will become operational in 1988. They are presently scattered because they lack an appropriate building.

Briefs

World Bank Credit

The Finance and Public Credit Secretariat announced yesterday the World Bank has granted Mexico a credit for $500 million to support our nonpetroleum exports. With this financing, the fifth of a series that total $1.6223 billion granted to the National Bank for Foreign Trade, we will acquire supplies, machinery, and equipment needed by the exporting production sector to maintain or increase its production. [Summary] */Mexico City EL NACIONAL in Spanish 8 Dec 87 p 1 PA/*

Oil Price Drops

The price Mexico receives for its oil fell in November in all three markets—Europe, the Americas, and the Far East—where it is sold, Pemex said Wednesday. [Excerpt] */Mexico City THE NEWS in English 10 Dec 87 p 43 PA/*

Inflation Rate Figures

The Bank of Mexico reported Wednesday that the inflation rate for November 1987 hit 7.9 percent, which is slightly less than it was in October. This brought inflation for the first 11 months of this year to 125.8 percent. [Summary] *[Mexico City THE NEWS in English 10 Dec 87 p 1, 6 PA]*

Belize

Opposition, Fire at Minister's House Linked

FL150247 Bridgetown CANA in English 2029 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Text] Belmopan, Belize, Dec 14, CANA—The opposition Peoples United Party (PUP) called on Monday for a full inquiry into a fire which destroyed the home of the minister of home affairs after the prime minister linked the government's opponents to the blaze.

Prime Minister Manuel Esquivel told a rally on Thursday that he would order a ban on contacts by ministers and civil servants with the opposition.

Esquivel, speaking a day earlier at a press conference, said the government was convinced that the fire was politically motivated arson.

This is not so much an attack on an individual, Esquivel said. It is an attack on the framework of the constitutional government and it affects the kind of society in which we live.

The PUP issued a statement deploring what it said were malicious attempts of the government to implicate the party in the fire which last Monday morning burned to the ground the home of the deputy prime minister and minister and home affairs, Curl Thompson.

The statement accused government ministers of abusive, insulting, and threatening behaviour and it criticized the prime minister for making highly provocative, bellicose, and politically irresponsible statements at the press conference and at the political meeting.

The Peoples United Party considers all these actions and statements directed against the party and in particular the orders of the deputy prime minister, Mr Curl Thompson, given to the police and security forces to interrogate the party leader, Mr George Price, and other leaders of the party in connection with the recent fire, to be blatant acts of harrassment and intimidation.

Thompson piloted recently through parliament a controversial bill to establish a secret intelligence service.

Costa Rica

Government To Investigate Anti-Panama 'Plot'

PA151430 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 1200 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Text] The government has asked for a thorough investigation into the charges made by Panamanian Ambassador David Pere about a plot to assassinate Panama's General Manuel Antonio Noriega.

Yesterday afternoon acting Foreign Minister Carlos Rivera called in the Panamanian diplomat to learn officially about the charges. Rivera said he listened to Pere's opinions on the charges and told him that the government will investigate them. Rivera said an order has been issued to gather all the information on this situation so a report can be presented to the Council of Government by all the ministries connected with security matters.

Acting President Jorge Manuel Dengo yesterday afternoon ordered that the charges made by the Panamanian ambassador be discussed by the Council of Government. The Foreign Relations, Public Security, and government ministries, as well as the Intelligence and Security Directorate, will make every effort to thoroughly investigate this matter.

Upon ordering the investigation, acting President Dengo said the Council of Government will devote most of its time Wednesday to reviewing this situation and learning about the results of the investigation because the fact that the country has been implicated in this serious matter is worrisome.

El Salvador

Rivera y Damas on Truce, Death Threat

PA160028 San Salvador La Voz Panamericana in Spanish 1400 GMT 13 Dec 87

[Homily by San Salvador Archbishop Arturo Rivera y Damas at the San Salvador Metropolitan Cathedral—live]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] The Salvadoran people expect war actions to stop during the Christmas season so the hope for a rational end to the conflict can continue to be kindled. Certainly, the people await a Christmas truce to celebrate the Lord's birthday peacefully and without mourning. [applause] I understand it is not easy for the warring parties to fulfill this genuine desire for the savior's family, yet it is worthwhile to creatively seek a way to make sure the truce will work. [applause]

Of course, we share the view of those who want not a temporary cessation of hostilities but an end to the war. This, however, cannot be achieved overnight. There were 18 victims of violence this week, the legal advisory office reported. This should encourage us to keep working for peace. [passage omitted]

The essential conditions for true peace, however, include true respect for human rights. This is why we strongly condemn the murder of Dr Rene Joaquin Cardenas Vargas, head of the departmental office of the Human Rights Commission in San Miguel. We likewise express our concern, not only over the brief coverage of this crime by some news media, but, above all, over the

marked contrast between the angry and many protests over the violent death of Herbert Sanabria and the few protests heard over an equally dirty crime.

I do not usually mention personal matters, but I am forced to report that, on the same day that a letter of mine supporting the just demands of Catholic high schools was published, and clearly connected with my letter, a member of my family received an anonymous phone call threatening me with death. I would not want this to be taken advantage of politically, but I thought it necessary to report it at this place where we have defended the right to life so many times. Amen. [applause] [passage omitted]

Amnesty Granted to Killers of U.S. Citizens

PA150139 San Salvador EL DIARIO DE HOY in Spanish 14 Dec 87 p 10

[Text] Rosa Maria Fortin, San Salvador's 5th criminal court judge, has decreed an amnesty for Captain Eduardo Ernesto Avila and two former guardsmen who were sentenced for the murder of three U.S. citizens and Rodolfo Viera Lizama, ISTA [Salvadoran Institute of Agrarian Transformation] president.

This is the second time—after the Las Hojas case—in which the amnesty law, in effect since 5 November, has benefited former Army members involved in political crimes.

In the Viera case the judge signed the amnesty last Friday and both parties involved in the process were notified, according to statements made by Fortin to EL DIARIO DE HOY.

Rosa Maria Fortin, a law school graduate, said that according to a study she conducted with an adviser appointed by the Supreme Court, the killing of the three U.S. citizens and the ISTA president, which took place in 1981, has all the trappings of a political crime. They therefore concluded that this case should fall under the provisions of the amnesty law enacted within the framework of the Esquipulas II regional agreement.

The amnesty was requested by Luis Arevalo Rivas, defense attorney for the accused, who said that the killing of the three U.S. citizens and the Salvadoran official was a political crime that grew out of the "political circumstances that prevailed in 1981 that resulted from the armed conflict and the so-called agrarian reform."

During the trial it was said that Viera Lizama and the three U.S. citizens were in an exclusive hotel located northwest of the capital when they were shot to death in early January of that year.

After the murder guardsmen Santiago Gomez Gonzalez and Jose Dimas Valle Acevedo, who implicated Capt Eduardo Ernesto Avila, among others, were arrested.

In February 1986 the guardsmen were found guilty by a jury, and the judge sentenced both to 30-year prison sentences, the maximum sentence. In the trial Capt Avila was granted a stay, and this resolution was confirmed by the criminal court's second chamber [camara segunda], but on several occasions attempts have been made to reopen the case and to prosecute the military man.

Finally, Judge Fortin said that the former guardsmen at present are in Mariona prison, despite the amnesty that was decreed in their favor, because the Attorney General's Office verbally appealed the resolution.

AD Breaks Pact With PDC; Officials Resign

PA151637 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Text] The leadership of the Democratic Action Party [AD] has announced the party's decision to break the political pact it had maintained for 3 years with the Christian Democratic Party [PDC]. As a result of this decision Foreign Trade Minister Ricardo Gonzalez Camacho has resigned from the ministry and as a delegate to the National Reconciliation Commission.

Three years ago the AD signed a political pact with the PDC that ensured the permanence of several AD leaders in public posts. After evaluating the government the AD executive council has decided to break the agreement.

[Begin Gonzalez recording] The interparty political cooperation pact we signed at the beginning of this government, before December 1984, has lost its raison d'etre for many reasons—first, because it has not allowed us to influence government decisions the way we wanted to. We wanted to contribute to the system's liberalization and its social and economic development. [end recording]

Gonzalez Camacho pointed out that this effort to influence government decisions has been useless because the Christian Democrats have maintained their demagogic and closed positions throughout the past 3 years. He also criticized the government's lack of functionality, saying it is more prepared to talk about the virtues of the democratic process than to make them effective in practice.

[Begin Gonzalez recording] The responsible and capable men who are still in the PDC, including the president, must feel quite frustrated; they must [words indistinct] frustrating that the government does not [words indistinct] it deals them daily blows and [words indistinct] and we can no longer bear this frustration. That is why we have resigned. [end recording]

This resignation leaves empty the leading positions at the Foreign Trade Ministry, BANAFI [National Industrial Development Bank], and the vice presidency of

INCAFE [National Coffee Institute]. Gonzalez Camacho said his party's decision forces him to withdraw from the National Reconciliation Commission, for which he was a government delegate.

Nicaragua

D. Ortega: Troop Buildup Plans 'Distorted'

PA151405 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1200 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Text] Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega denied that plans existed to extend the war to the Central American countries in case of a foreign military intervention, as traitor Roger Miranda has said in the United States. Speaking to a group of foreign correspondents, the president also denied that in case of a military invasion the Sandinists would take U.S. citizens residing in Nicaragua hostage and would attack by air Washington's embassy in Costa Rica.

These plans were disclosed in the United States by traitor Roger Miranda, who fled Nicaragua 1 month ago. Only in the minds of those who work with Miranda, in other words the CIA, can those projects exist, President Ortega said. President Ortega said the statements made this weekend by Commander Humberto Ortega to the effect that the Army plans to increase troops to 600,000 men by 1995 were distorted. President Ortega said the number of Sandinist troops would not be more than 80,000, although he stated the government expects to have 600,000 Nicaraguans ready and willing to fight in case of an invasion.

President Ortega said: What the defense minister said is nothing new. All he did was to repeat a speech that is repeated all the time and which he has to give since he is responsible for the country's military defense. President Ortega also said his government has not supplied the Salvadoran guerrillas with surface-to-air missiles, nor trained them in their use, adding that the FMLN guerrillas have so much experience they could train several armies. On the other hand, Ortega blamed the U.S. Government for bringing those missiles to Central America through the contras. Ortega said those missiles can change hands, and we have stated that they could appear in the hands of armed groups in the area at any time.

On the possibility of acquiring MIG chase planes, the president said these types of planes are necessary to halt the contra air drops, but he stressed that his government only made inquiries that were not fulfilled. Ortega stated that with Nicaragua's war situation the Army is obligated to prepare different defense plans for the country, but he stressed that these would be changed if the regional peace agreements are successful. President Ortega said: It would be up to us, Central Americans, to discuss a reasonable balance of power, arms limitation, and the eradication of the foreign military presence in the area. He said the Reagan administration, through Miranda, is trying to undermine the confidence of Central American countries in Nicaragua and make the Esquipulas II peace plan fail.

The White House is making every effort to kill the peace agreement, just when Congress is discussing new funds for the contras, the president warned. In conclusion, Ortega said the accusations made by traitor Miranda are not new but are made by a deserter who should be asked how much the CIA has paid him.

Ortega Comments on Current Situation

PM160832 Paris LE MONDE in French 15 Dec 87 pp 1, 3

[Report on interview with President Daniel Ortega by Bertrand de la Grange in Managua—date not given]

[Text] Managua—The summit between Presidents Reagan and Gorbachev in Washington last week is "an important first step toward disarmament," President Daniel Ortega admitted, but it might also have negative consequences for Nicaragua. "With the signing of this agreement," he told us, "the United States might now feel free to do what it wants in Nicaragua. On the strength of his new image, President Reagan might be tempted to deal Nicaragua a fatal blow without this undermining the agreement signed with the Soviet Union."

This is the scenario of U.S. military intervention so frequently discussed by the Sandinists since the 1979 revolution.

With a view to the Washington summit, at which regional conflicts, and hence Nicaragua, were discussed, Mr Ortega visited Moscow in early November. "On that occasion Mr Gorbachev assured me he would defend the Nicaraguan people's position and their desire to honor the pledges which the Central American countries made in Guatemala on 7 August with the aim of achieving peace. He confirmed to me that regional problems could not be the subject of negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union because of the respect due to all nations, including the smallest ones."

How far can Moscow's support go, and what are we to think of the persistent rumors that the Soviet leadership is dissatisfied with the Sandinists' economic management and with the waste of aid given by the socialist countries?

"In Mr Ortega's view, relations are as good as ever, and Soviet aid, including oil supplies, has even increased this year." [quotation marks as published] While maintaining preferential links with the socialist world, Nicaragua also wants to diversify its relations, particularly with Europe. "To help us implement the peace plan we need political and economic support from the EEC countries." The president admitted that Nicaragua has lost

confidence in some European countries, but, he added, "we are now making up lost ground, notably with the FRG, which is a key country for us."

This development, Mr Ortega thinks, is due to the "flexibility" which his government is showing in facilitating implementation of the peace plan, but the main objective still has to be achieved: the negotiation of a cease-fire with the contras and the establishment of a democratic regime.

"These are complex negotiations," the Nicaraguan president said, "and we will not resolve a problem that has existed for 7 years overnight, especially because the United States is making every effort to sabotage the Guatemalan plan. The United States wants to prevent a cease-fire coming into force before 15 January (the limit set by the Central American presidents for the implementation of the peace plan) and to blame Nicaragua for it. In so doing, President Reagan hopes to obtain from Congress the $270 million he has requested for the contras."

The Nicaraguan president still refuses to negotiate with the insurgents who, he said, "are merely a U.S. tool for destroying the revolution." "If the contra leaders decide to lay down their arms and request amnesty, they will be able to participate in politics on the same basis as the existing political parties." What if they refuse to do so, as they have done several times, stressing that it would amount to capitulation and political suicide? "In that case," Mr Ortega said, "they run the risk of total military defeat."

The Sandinists constantly reaffirm that there should be direct negotiations with the United States, which is the real "aggressor." "We are prepared to take into account Washington's interests," Mr Ortega said. "The main U.S. argument is that we are a threat to U.S. security. We could discuss that, but only if we discuss the U.S. aggression against us. We must therefore negotiate a mutual security pact which makes provision for a verification system. The aim would be to rid Central America of all foreign military presence. This is a long-term objective, because we must be realistic," in view of the importance of the military installations the United States has in the region.

An agreement of this kind, Mr Ortega added, would establish specific rules relating to "the presence of foreign military advisers or foreign troops in Nicaragua, and to types of weapon, including nuclear weapons. In addition, we could promise to not allow the installation of any military bases on our territory. Finally, we could establish a balance of forces in Central America on a reasonable basis. That should lead to the normalization of relations between the United States and Nicaragua."

President Ortega thinks that 15 January ought not be viewed as a deadline but as one stage in the implementation of the peace plan. "On that date we will have to draw up a new timetable for the following months. If, in the wake of the agreement signed with the Soviet Union, the United States decided to respect the Guatemalan plan and stop giving aid to the contras, the problem could be resolved in the near future. If not, the war will continue."

Is the population, which faces a constantly deteriorating economic situation, prepared to accept more sacrifices? Mr Ortega has no doubts about that, stating, against all the evidence, that "the people are not demoralized." The president said that "despite the difficulties, the poor are still benefiting from the revolution's achievements, particularly small farmers to whom the government guarantees access to essential products. It is the rich who are suffering as a result of the crisis."

President Ortega thinks the people are living better than in the days of Somoza's dictatorship. "I personally went hungry at that time, and yet I was not living in Managua's poorest district. All workers can now eat in canteens although the quality of the food has deteriorated recently because the war is making some products scarce. Unfortunately, many people saw the revolution as the creation of a paternalist state which ought to provide for all their needs. This is obviously impossible. There is no question of changing our economic policy, which aims to share wealth among all, while giving priority to the defense of the country and the revolution. We are therefore not in a position to implement an economic policy that would promote the country's development. It is a survival economy."

[De la Grange] In these circumstances, is it any surprise that the contras have found support among the population, particularly in the remote rural areas where the peasants have not benefited from the revolution?

[Ortega] In fact those peasants stop supporting the contras as soon as the Army is deployed in the region and implements social programs to help them. This shows that those peasants were forced to collaborate with the contras.

Before Msgr Obando was appointed to mediate between the government and the insurgents, just a few months ago, the top Sandinist leaders were hinting that the cardinal was merely a "CIA agent"! "That is true," Mr Ortega admitted, "we had disagreements with the cardinal, but we decided to forget them to work together for peace." President Ortega has returned to a more moderate definition of Sandinism: "It is a synthesis," he said, "between the nationalism of Sandino, who fought the U.S. invaders in the late twenties, and of two interesting elements—Christianity and Marxism, which are complementary."

How does Nicaragua differ from Cuba? "We have a large private sector, opposition parties, a counterrevolutionary press, and, of course, the Christian content of the

revolution." However, he said, "Cuba provides us with an example by proving that it is possible to resist U.S. aggression and to survive an economic blockade."

Opposition Walks Out of Dialogue Meeting

PA160007 Managua Radio Catolica in Spanish 1800 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Report on interview with Agustin Jarquin Anaya, secretary general of the Social Christian Party, with unidentified reporter in Managua on 15 December—recorded]

[Excerpt] [Announcer] Following this morning's session of the national dialogue, when the delegates of 14 political parties walked out of their meeting with government representatives, we interviewed Agustin Jarquin Anaya, secretary general of the Social Christian Party.

[Begin recording] [Jarquin] Today, in view of the government's virtual refusal to accept the constitutional amendments, which are well known by the people and which have been officially presented to the government, the parties and organizations that presented these amendments are withdrawing from the dialogue meeting. We hope there will be some final reconsideration by the government so that before the 21st of this month, when the regular sessions of the dialogue end, it will agree to the partial amendment of the Constitution based on the 17 proposals these 14 political groups have submitted to achieve the country's democratization within the framework of the Esquipulas II agreements.

The government is assuming a serious responsibility because by insisting on its refusal it will be ruling out a civilian and political solution to the country's serious crisis. We again call on the government to reconsider its position, and we are willing to rejoin the national dialogue on 21 December if the government implements the constitutional amendments we have proposed. We hope President's Ortega's government will reconsider its attitude for the sake of our national patriotic interests and of the deep desires of all Nicaraguans who want a prompt solution to this crisis that affects us all.

[Reporter] The parties attended the meeting. Could you tell us what happened?

[Jarquin] All the representatives of the 15 [as heard] political groups who are meeting with the government showed up at the meeting. The 14 political parties and groups presented to the government... [changes thought] we learned of the government's reply, which contains several inaccuracies about the conduct of the opposition, which includes a wide spectrum from the left to the right, disregarding ideological and personal differences and motivated mainly by patrioitic interests.

The government's reply was basically a trick, because it proposed that the constitutional amendments be sent to the Assembly and that we continue to discuss the points on the agenda. It is obvious, as the second point in the agenda is the municipal issue, that this dialogue cannot continue as long as there is no constitutional amendment regarding the municipal and electoral aspect, which is contained in the 17 points we proposed.

The government's reply was practically a new denial of the constitutional amendment we were requesting. We are hoping that the government, out of patriotism, will agree to amend the Constitution as we proposed. We always will be willing—due to our respect for the nation's interests—to continue the national dialogue on 22 December, provided the Constitution has been amended by 21 December. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Vice President Ramirez on Peace Process

PA152225 Havana International Service in Spanish 2300 GMT 14 Dec 87

[Report by Margarita Barrios on news conference by Vice President Sergio Ramirez with unidentified reporters in Havana on 14 December—passages in quotation marks recorded]

[Text] [Ramirez] "I would like to tell you that the Nicaraguan Government has been in touch with Nicaraguan Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo to try to set up a new round of negotiations to discuss the cease-fire agreement. The date for the new round of indirect discussions to be held in Santo Domingo is to be determined. We hope this new attempt to reach a cease-fire agreement will be held before Christmas."

[Barrios] Another of the questions asked Vice President Ramirez dealt with the work of the Verification and Follow-Up Commission of the Esquipulas II agreement.

[Ramirez] "The Verification and Follow-Up Commission held its most recent meeting in New York approximately 10 days ago. It was presided over by the UN secretary general. At that meeting we made progress concerning the various verification mechanisms, and we listened to the report presented by the local verification commissions.

"The commission decided to send its technical team to Central America during the 1st week of January to make a country-by-country assessment so the commission will have a report ready for the upcoming presidential summit to be held in Costa Rica on 15 January."

[Barrios] In answer to a question posed by a U.S. reporter about the impossibility of the Sandinist government resolving the country's economic problems and the effects of this difficulty on the popularity of the Sandinist government, Vice President Sergio Ramirez said:

[Ramirez] "We must consider that Nicaragua was a very poor country prior to the revolutionary triumph. In fact, that poverty and unfair situation brought about the

revolutionary process. In 1980, before the U.S. Government announced the war of aggression against Nicaragua, our country's GDP rose 22 percent, and we planned to maintain an average annual economic growth of 12-14 percent at that time.

"Thus, the serious difficulties we are now facing are not the results of our inexperience or lack of skill in handling economic matters, but the fault of a more powerful country, that empire, which has chosen a systematic policy to try to destroy our country and its revolutionary process with all the consequences that such a policy entails.

"However, the U.S. Government has not succeeded in breaking our morale, and that is a basic problem for the Reagan administration. It has not been able to alter the Nicaraguan people's political will, despite the enormous difficulties we are facing."

Defense Ministry on Contra Panali Air Attack
PA152312 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1930 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Report on communique issued by the Defense Ministry Public and Foreign Relations Directorate in Managua on 15 December]

[Text] The Defense Ministry reported this morning that there was an air attack on the Panali settlement in La Segovia aimed at destroying the EPS antiaircraft positions in that region. According to this report, the rockets fired by the contra planes fell far from their targets and did not cause casualties or damage. The antiaircraft defense in Region I is seriously hampering the mercenaries' air supply operations.

Meanwhile, the Nicaraguan Foreign Ministry is drafting a letter of protest to the Honduran Government, because the airplanes used in the attack took off from that country. A Foreign Ministry spokesman said the letter will probably be delivered this afternoon.

The Defense Ministry also reported that the EPS had seized three arms caches and all sorts of war materiel in different sectors in the South Atlantic and Jinotega. Yesterday, the EPS seized a contra arms cache in the Toro Bayo Stream area, southwest of Nueva Guinea in the South Atlantic autonomous region. The cache contained 6 AK rifles, 41 clips for AK rifles, 29 bayonets for AK rifles, 30 rifle straps, 30 cans of rifle cleaning fluid, and 9 (CAT) 57-mm shells. On that same day a counterrevolutionary cache was confiscated in (La Chiflera) Stream, northeast of San Jose de Bocay in Jinotega Department. That arms cache contained 4 AK rifles, 67 grenades for M-79 grenade launchers, 31,500 7.62-mm rounds, and 4 waterproof parachutes. Also on that day a mercenary arms cache was found in El Rosario, northeast of Muelle de los Bueyes in the South Atlantic autonomous region. The cache contained seven pairs of jungle boots, two uniforms, and four hammocks.

There was also a clash yesterday northeast of Rio Blanco in Matagalpa Department. Four mercenaries were killed and two were captured.

The following terrorist actions were committed against the civilian population and economic targets. On 13 December a counterrevolutionary group kidnapped six civilians in (Santa Elka), northeast of Matiguas in Matagalpa Department. On 14 December mercenaries killed one civilian and kidnapped three people in the (Yacalwasito) River area, northeast of (Clandellama) in Jinotega Department.

Contra Leader Robelo Comments on Pacification
PY141633 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0046 GMT 13 Dec 87

[Quotation marks as received]

[Text] Montevideo, 12 Dec (EFE)—Alfonso Robelo, leader of the Nicaraguan "contras," today stated in Uruguay that the pacification of his country "is a remote possibility, but everything possible must be done to achieve it."

Robelo, who is in Montevideo participating in an international congress, has stated that although the "contras" are not signatories, they accept the Esquipulas II (Guatemala) peace plan and have contributed to achieving it."

The 47-year-old "contra" leader was for 9 months a member of the Nicaraguan Government Junta following the defeat of Anastasio Somoza's government. He resigned "because of the Sandinist move toward totalitarianism."

Referring to the negotiations that Managua Archbishop Miguel Obando y Bravo is conducting for a cease-fire, the current leader of the Nicaraguan Resistance stated that the initiative "was fully accepted by the 'contras,' but not by the Managua government."

According to Robelo, the pacification of the zone "is a remote possibility, but to prevent a civil war among brethren everything possible must be done, and we (the contras) are not creating any obstacle in the path to finding a solution," he stated.

The contra leader added, however, that "we will be very careful not to be deceived again."

Robelo defended the need for U.S. economic aid, and he added that this aid cannot be suspended because it will weaken the contras and force them to surrender."

According to him, the Reagan administration's aid has been reduced from $100 million "to only $3.2 million," which is "mere humanitarian aid for clothing, medicine, and foodstuffs."

Ortegas' Speeches 'Threatening' to Opposiiton

PA161252 Managua LA PRENSA in Spanish 14 Dec 87 p 2

[Editorial: "Threats Cast Doubt on Willingness To Achieve Peace"]

[Text] At least two of the issues touched on by the defense minister during his speech at a labor congress last Friday are not only unfortunate but also untimely and even dangerous.

His threats against a civic and defenseless opposition, which recently started to organize freely and which is needed by the country to transfer the political controversy from the military to the civic level, is not a matter that might concern an Army general. At the most, it might concern the interior minister.

The tone used by General Ortega is not in keeping with the spirit of Esquipulas II, which insists on the use of national reconciliation and dialogue as civilized instruments to settle problems.

His strange announcement that Nicaragua will have 600,000 men in active military service in the next few years is irresponsible, unachievable, and very untimely. Such a measure is definitely not in keeping with agreements signed by his brother, who committed himself in Guatemala to demilitarize his country. The Defense Ministry promises to do exactly the opposite.

The figure of more than half a million armed men corresponds to the number of armed men in the FRG, a country with a population at least 15 times that of Nicaragua.

Furthermore, if under the present conditions, and by his own confession there are 300,000 enrolled soldiers, including reservists, and the treasury is spending 50 percent of its revenue to maintain them, we ask: How will they find resources to maintain an army three times as large as the current one?

However, it was encouraging to hear his brother, President Ortega, say this morning over the radio that the Defense Ministry referred to a mere proposal from the Army to the executive, a proposal not yet approved.

Although President Daniel Ortega did not applaud the general's militarization ideas, he used a different tone to suggest that the civic opposition in Nicaragua would be punished in the case of a possible failure of Esquipulas II.

The statements made by the two Ortegas in separate speeches this weekend were regrettably threatening and contradictory to the dialogue spirit opened by Esquipulas II.

Both of them suggested being aware of a possible invasion of Nicaragua—which, in our opinion, would only take place if the Sandinist government fails to comply and insists on militarizing the country to levels that could pose a threat to other Central American countries.

If they signed agreements and are willing to honor their word, the Ortega brothers have nothing to worry about. Furthermore, at this point they should not waste time looking for possible culprits should negotiations fail; they should seek a cease-fire and make it the cornerstone of an effort to promote national reconciliation, through dialogue and negotiation, and, in turn, to also achieve a lasting peace.

Supreme Court Justices Present Resignations

PA160314 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1930 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Excerpt] According to the new Constitution, the Supreme Court justices will be appointed by the National Assembly from a list submitted by President Ortega. The current justices therefore have presented their resignations to the president. This is what Chief Justice Alejandro Serrano Caldera told our reporters. He also said that the justices will remain in their posts until the new justices are appointed and that there will be no interruption of the legal process, because operations will continue until the new justices are appointed by the National Assembly. Serrano said the following:

[Begin recording] The Constitution states that the Supreme Court justices will be appointed by the National Assembly. In view of this, the president has decided to send the list of nominees to the Assembly before the latter's current session ends.

Therefore, all the Supreme Court justices have received a letter from the president. The letter says that to comply with the Consitution, which states that the National Assembly will appoint the Supreme Court justices, we are requested to tender our resignations. Once this formality has been complied with the president will send the list of nominees to the National Assembly. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Correction to H. Ortega on Force Levels

The following pertains to the item headlined "Humberto Ortega on Military Force Levels," published in the 14 December Latin America DAILY REPORT, page 19:

column one, paragraph one, last line: ...and drug trafficking.

This campaign is part of the U.S. attempts to make the Esquipulas effort, which has faced all sorts of obstacles, fail totally. True, the Esquipulas process is complex and difficult, but this effort is progressing. It has for the first time managed to get the Central American presidents to seek ways to achieve peace in the region.

Reagan wants the Esquipulas agreement to collapse. But why does he want this? So there will not be any other option. He wants war; he wants to continue the war of aggression and to prepare a possible invasion of Nicaragua. So what is Reagan doing? He is lying, playing tricks, and causing delays. Why? So the world will believe that Nicaragua does not want to fulfill the Esquipulas agreements and that, therefore, if the Nicaraguans make the Esquipulas agreement fail there is no other alternative—in view of the dogfights in which the Central Americans are again engaged—than if I, Ronald Reagan, approve $1.27 billion as the only way to save the Central American region. He is trying to cause the Esquipulas agreement to collapse. This is what he wants to accomplish by raising obstacles to the peace effort.

I want to say very quickly that, as an important part of that plan to continue the war against Nicaragua, both militarily and politically, the United States has assigned an important role to the right wing that still resides, lives, or breathes here in Nicaragua—and let this be clear—thanks to the workers, the peasants, and the Sandinist power. This right wing includes everyone. It is an interesting species. It includes so-called deserters of the proletarian interests, of the Bolshevik revolution, the Politburo, and the Central Committee—all those petty communists and socialists who are not revolutionaries, much less scientific, and who do not understand Marxism. No, they understand these things as dogmas and recipes. Who knows how? In any event, they hide their desires and vanity. They are not revolutionaries, they are not representatives of the working class; they are small groups who did nothing during the Somozist era and who now—taking advantage of the economic difficulties the revolution is experiencing and of the bad situation we are all in—attempt to confuse the workers, trying to gain their confidence by allegedly representing the left wing's most radical interests. They are clearly opportunists.

It is said the extremes of this species have joined. This is true, because some of the left-wing groups of that species have joined the groups that best represent the Nicaraguan right wing. They raise the same arguments against the Sandinist revolution, coinciding totally with Reagan's plan against Nicaragua. That right wing includes everything and everyone. But it is important that the people know, above all, about some of the aspects of the enemy's work, through this right wing, within the framework of political continuity and of the mature democratic process the revolution has responsibly allowed.

We have to note here that we are watching a series of actions by those right-wing groups with the worst instincts, who clearly fit in with Reagan's mercenary plan of destabilization against Nicaragua. They are engaging in actions that are even subversive. They are overstepping the limit that the law and democracy permit the various political groups, which should exist in this country and which we will continue to preserve. We are not [words indistinct] as part of that destabilization plan are calling for and inciting disorder and disobedience in the military service, creating rumors, and causing a sense of alarm and fear regarding what the revolution is living through and suffering. They are going beyond the framework this popular revolution has permitted.

And what does the right wing vainly attempt? What does the CIA vainly attempt? Taking advantage of this political framework, they stupidly believe the people, as a result of these warnings, will rise up in revolt, as they did with Somoza, against the Sandinists to crush the revolution. They do not realize that what they are doing with those irresponsible actions is creating a storm. This storm will emerge from the vigorous desire of the workers, peasants, soldiers, and revolutionary patriots of our Sandinist people's revolution. [applause]

The right wing had better not think the people's revolution will not charge them a high price [words indistinct] of Central America in the Esquipulas agreement. The right wing had better not think irresponsibly that we, the people and workers, will not make them pay if there is a major war or an invasion here. The right wing had better tremble. Let the right wing tremble before the justice our peoples will demand. [applause]

We will not give the right wing a chance to point out to the Marines which Nicaraguan workers or laborers support the revolution so the Marines can kill them during an invasion. We will not give them that opportunity. Let this be clear to our class enemies. [slogans]

Therefore, I repeat, we support the government's efforts; we support the revolution of mixed economy and political pluralism. However, we are carefully observing all those things that are virtually part of a direct, irresponsible, and adventuresome game of Nicaragua's enemies—the enemies of our people and this revolution.

In conclusion, I only wish to reaffirm today—to face any campaign our enemies are planning at this time and in keeping with the mobilization effort we must immediately implement—that our plans to arm the people in this phase have not been completely finalized; they have not been finalized.

It is already clear that it was difficult to make great economic and social progress in this stage. We had approximately 2 years to (?achieve that) with difficulties, without experience, with a country facing a crisis, a backward country, a country destroyed by the war for liberation and by the insurrection, a country exploited by Yankees and the right wing.

As you recall, here we do not even have... [changes thought] we have already undergone 10 years of revolution; we all remember what Nicaragua was like 8 years ago. Did we have a city of great avenues, large buildings, great industries, and heavy consumption? Where are those cities? Where is the heavy consumption, large stores, businesses, and the economic power inherited

from the Yankees? We inherited 150 years of Yankee domination. What did the right wing in Nicaragua bequeath to us in this century? It bequeathed nothing to us; not even good hospitals. It increased poverty.

Therefore, in a few years it was impossible—even if there had been no war—in 10, 15, 20, or 30 years it would be impossible to bring this country out of the backwardness inherited from the Yankees, the bureaucratic bourgeoisie, and the right wing that talks so much. Even without a war it would have been a difficult task. Reagan only gave us approximately 2 years with which to begin pushing what we initially called national reconstruction.

And then came the war, and virtually everything has revolved around it. This is correct, because what do I want a tire factory for if imperialism can come later and take it away from me by ousting me from power? We must first find ways to defend our sovereignty and power and then we must gradually push forward social and economic tasks to the extent of our abilities. That is the task; that is the phase we are in.

Therefore, it is in this way that the war has not allowed us... [changes thought] has made our social and economic tasks more difficult to achieve, because we have focused all our efforts on defense.

I said that the great task of fulfilling our initial great plans must be viewed in a timeframe of, say, 1980 to 1995, because we must view things strategically; we must view things within deadlines, allowing us to mature and to have the time to fulfill those plans—deadlines cannot be very short. We must have a deadline extending to about 1995, according to the country's prospects, the growth of its population, its military doctrine, and the threat of Yankee intervention, because as long as the Yankees do not change we will always have to have—even if we do not have many problems with the Yankees—an adequate defense here with which to face other Reagans after Reagan leaves. We could even face others who are worse than Reagan; we cannot rely on changes—it might be a Democrat now and then a Republican. We cannot vary our level of defense; it will be more or less, but it will be at a constant level, it will be at a constant level [repeats himself]. [applause]

Therefore, to ensure that we will bequeath that constant [level of defense] in our country to our sons, we are obligated to give them the weapons and the system to defend their power and their fatherland. Let us not forget this: The first thing we must bequeath to our sons is a cause, an ideology, moral values, and a sense of dignity, because material goods will cost them—even the Yankees are running around in the wake of a crisis created by their imperialist system of inequalities.

In this regard, when we talk about a 1980-1995 timeframe we are talking about 15 years, right? In 15 years, well, I am still looking good, I think; I am 40 years old. [laughter] There are still 7 years to go; we are still here, right? [laughter, applause]

In considering those 15 years we are taking into account all characteristics of the doctrine, the plans, and the country's possibilities, but we are also taking into consideration that defense does not preclude economic issues; if war should come all the experience we have in planning, organization, and resources would be very readily (?used) in all production plans, and I am sure that the Army would contribute tremendously to improving efficiency, productivity, implementation, and performance to produce more for our people. I am fully convinced of that; I fully trust that this will be so.

This is also why the Yankees do not make peace with the Sandinists, because they know that we are quickly recovering from our current problems. We will set an example for Latin America and Central America, because the Yankees want to kill the example Nicaragua sets; it does not only want to kill the Sandinists [words indistinct].

We have set... (providing omitted passage)

Panama

Assembly President Favors Political Amnesty

PA151741 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 15 Dec 87 p 1

[Article by Jaime Aparicio]

[Text] Legislative Assembly President Alberto Aleman Boyd yesterday said he is in favor of political amnesty, as long as "the country's peace can be guaranteed."

Aleman Boyd said: "The amnesty would affect all people who were involved in past situations and who are involved now. If an amnesty can guarantee that the country will have peace in the framework of respect it should be considered."

According to the president of the Assembly, in the case of former Colonel Roberto Diaz Herrera a "pardon" must be granted, which can only be done by the executive branch; however, an amnesty would benefit dozens of opposition political leaders out of the country." [quotation mark as published]

However, Aleman Boyd said that "those who tried to disrupt public order in the country and tried to divide the Panamanian family must be punished as established by law."

Political amnesty was suggested 2 weeks ago by Government and Justice Minister Rodolfo Chiari De Leon as well as by government and opposition legislators.

Officials Discuss Overtures to Libya

PA151833 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 1730 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Excerpt] Speaking to UPI, Panamanian Presidential Spokesman Jose Hernandez has said that he cannot fully confirm a report by the U.S. daily newspaper NEWSDAY quoting U.S. official and government sources as saying that Panama has requested $200 million from the Libyan Government.

Planning Minister Ricaurte Vasquez confirmed that Libya has expressed interest in helping the Panamanian cause. I do not know the details, Vasquez told UPI. I know that a group of Panamanian visitors was in Libya, but they had no official representation, he noted. [passage omitted]

Further on Agreements

PA151729 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 15 Dec 87 pp 1, A-18

[Article by Hermes Sucre Serrano: "Libya Admits It Will Sign Agreements With Our Country"]

[Text] Although the Panamanian Government has not officially announced that economic agreements have been reached with Libya, the Libyan press officer in Panama said it is very possible that a Libyan delegation will visit Panama before the end of the year to resolve details about the agreements.

"Relations between Panama and Libya are improving. Both countries are trying to do something that was discussed when General Omar Torrijos visited Tripoli," the official said in discussing the origins of the agreements.

The U.S. newspaper THE MIAMI HERALD yesterday published a front-page report that the Panamanian Government sent a delegation to Libya to ask for $200 million in economic aid to resolve the country's crisis. Nevertheless, the Libyan spokesman did not specify figures and only stated that "this decision is not made by one person but by a committee of representatives of the two countries who are responsible for the negotiations."

The embassy spokesman said he does not know the details of the agreements, but he admitted they seek a greater rapprochement between the two nations and involve aspects relating to commercial, cultural, and educational (student exchange) exchanges. Bananas, coffee, milk, and sugar were mentioned among the products that Libya might import.

Asked if the differences that have emerged in recent months between the United States and Panama are an element that has speeded up the reaching of agreements with Libya, the press officer replied that these rapprochement programs have existed since Torrijos visited Libya approximately 8 years ago and, as a result of the visit to Libya by a Panamanian delegation 3 weeks ago, the rapprochement plans were renewed.

He added that his country has always tried to maintain good relations with the peoples of the world, including the United States. In the case of Panama, he said that since Gen Omar Torrijos' visit ways have been sought to improve economic and cultural relations. "Both [types of relations] will be good for Libya and Panama," he added.

The source indicated that no similar agreements exist with any other Latin American country. There are cooperation agreements with Nicaragua. Libya has maintained diplomatic relations with Venezuela, Cuba, Nicaragua, Brazil, Argentina, Suriname, and Panama for the past 11 years.

The press officer said committees have been appointed in Libya and Panama to negotiate the cooperation agreements, and they are the only ones who know the details on what was previously analyzed by Torrijos and the Libyan leaders. "They are the only ones which will decide whether there will be modifications to the original plans," he stated.

Argentina

Nicaraguan Envoy Meets With Ministry Official

PY151509 Buenos Aires DYN in Spanish 0148 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Text] Buenos Aires, 14 Dec (DYN)—Nicaraguan Ambassador Fernando Guzman Cuadra said here today that achieving peace in Central America is not an "easy road." He pointed out that the FSLN will "respect the will of the people" in the upcoming Nicaraguan presidential elections.

Guzman Cuadra made this statement this afternoon upon leaving the Argentine Foreign Ministry, where he met for 2 hours with Alberto Ferrari Etcheverry, under secretary of inter-American affairs, and Ramon Villagra Delgado, director of the Central American region.

"We believe that it is the only road we can follow; therefore, we must be optimistic. However, that does not mean that we see it as an easy road," said Guzman Cuadra when he was asked about the peace plan signed by the five Central American presidents in Esquipulas [as received], Guatemala on 7 August.

He added that Nicaraguans "know that it is difficult. We know that there are many obstacles and that there are many who do not want that road to be followed in its entirety." He said this in obvious reference to the U.S. congressional resolution to continue financially aiding the contras.

Asked about the remarks made by Daniel Ortega that the FSLN will hand over the government but not the power, if it loses the upcoming presidential elections, Guzman Cuadra said that "we are obliged to respect the will of the people and therefore hand over the government to the person the people decide on."

He said: "The way I understand it, Commander Ortega was referring to the power of the people, the power we call the base and the power of the revolution which essentially lies with the workers, peasants, the small property owners, agricultural producers, and all the people who made possible the different type of society we now have."

Guzman Cuadra concluded by saying that "if we lose the elections we will hand over the government; there should be no doubt about that. However, we believe that the power of the people, which is the base of the revolution, will always be with the Sandinists."

Justicialist Party Head Cafiero Interviewed

PM151006 Rome LA REPUBBLICA in Italian 27 Nov 87 p 14

[Interview with Argentine Justicialist Party leader Antonio Cafiero in Rome by Alberto Flores d'Arcais; date not given]

[Text] Rome—"I would rather say nothing for the present." Antonio Cafiero will very probably be Argentina's next president but prefers to avoid the subject. Leader of the reformed Peronist party, he was the surprise winner in the September elections in which the "Justicialists" wrested 16 of Argentina's 22 provinces from the Radicals. A few days before Alfonsin's arrival in Italy Cafiero has come to our country as a guest of the Christian Democratic Party.

[D'Arcais] You do not want to discuss the future but you are indeed considered a future president. Will your party's election success lead to a division of power?

[Cafiero] In the 6 September elections the Justicialist Party became the majority party in Argentina. In a parliamentary system this normally causes the government's downfall, which is impossible in a presidential system such as ours. The government has called an interparty meeting to seek a democratic consensus to make it possible to govern for the 2 years before the presidential election. To surmount the economic crisis threatening Argentina we have said we are willing to grant our full support to the Radical government.

[D'Arcais] Does that mean you will join a government coalition?

[Cafiero] No, we will not join a government coalition. An unusual situation has come about, but one that facilitates the governing of Argentina. We are asking nothing in exchange except that the national government help us govern the 16 provinces that we have gained.

[D'Arcais] Your opinions differ very much from the government's, however, especially on economic policy.

[Cafiero] Responsibility for economic policy lies basically with the government. The government has submitted to parliament a series of bills introducing new taxes; we are willing to discuss these bills and to provide a quorum within the Chamber of Deputies as long as they are of a progressive nature and do not jeopardize the weakest sectors of society or the provinces' finances.

[D'Arcais] Are you willing to come to an agreement with Alfonsin on the foreign debt issue too?

[Cafiero] Our analysis of the foreign debt issue is not very different from the government's, namely, that the debt "is unpayable, unjustified, and the principal curb to Argentina's economic growth."

[D'Arcais] You are in favor of a unilateral moratorium, however.

[Cafiero] Yes. The major differences with the Radicals is that despite a great deal of talk, they are still paying out. We believe that Argentina must convince its creditors that, at least for the next 2 years, it is impossible to pay even part of the interest or that it must be reduced to the original rate (2-3 percent), which would entail a major reduction of the nominal value of the debt.

[D'Arcais] What if the banks do not agree to this?

[Cafiero] If this is not accepted, then Argentina is entitled to suspend payment.

[D'Arcais] You disagree with the government also on Argentina's other major problem, namely, that of the military's responsibility during the years of the dictatorship.

[Cafiero] In parliament we voted against the bill on "due obedience" because we consider it unconstitutional and, above all, immoral. Therefore, we are unwilling to approve any amnesty bill unless it is more open. We have always said that the problem of human rights violations in Argentina must be resolved without a spirit of revenge and with the utmost justice. If there are cases of injustice the executive can grant selective pardons in accordance with the Constitution. What we will not allow is any attempt to draw a veil over the events of the past because we do not want them to happen ever again.

[D'Arcais] Do you believe the conditions for another coup exist in Argentina at present?

[Cafiero] They are removed, virtually nonexistent, and I believe this is thanks to us. The Holy Week rebellion was defeated because, for the first time in Argentine history, the opposition party openly sided with the government to defend the Constitution.

[D'Arcais] Alfonsin has proposed an institutional reform that should provide for a prime minister and reduce the president's role. Do you agree with this?

[Cafiero] We are in favor of the reform, as the Radicals are. However, whereas the Radicals want to reform organizational aspects but not the philosophy of the present system, we want to create a different kind of state, as Spain has done or as Italy did at one time.

[D'Arcais] You could be the next president, but want to limit the president's powers?

[Cafiero] Personally, I would accept some modifications of the present system; however, I am not in favor of a parliamentary system such as Italy's because I do not believe it can be adapted to Argentine traditions and also because a country such as ours needs a stronger form of authority.

[D'Arcais] Peronism has never enjoyed a good reputation. What is Peronism's character now, following the renewal that you promoted?

[Cafiero] It is difficult to understand Peronism outside the Argentine context. I deny that Peronism was a fascist phenomenon. If I had to define it I would say that we are now a center-left party of social-Christian inspiration.

Brazil

Israel's Peres Arrives, Meets With Officials

PY142355 Rio de Janeiro Rede Globo Television in Portuguese 2200 GMT 14 Dec 87

[Text] Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres arrived in Brazil today for a 2-day visit to the country. He landed in Brasilia early in the afternoon, had a working meeting with his counterpart Abreu Sodre, and was received by President Sarney at the Planalto Palace early in the evening. Shim'on Peres is visiting Brazil to discuss bilateral relations and to analyze with Brazilian authorities the situation in the Middle East.

Tomorrow, Minister Peres will visit the Chamber of Deputies, the Senate, and the Supreme Court. He will fly to Montevideo late in the afternoon.

Departs for Uruguay

PY160037 Brasilia Domestic Service in Portuguese 2100 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Text] Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres today ended a 2-day visit to Brasilia and left for Uruguay. On Thursday he will return to Brazil to visit Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. A communique was released at the end of his visit. The communique states that the talks between Peres and Foreign Minister Abreu Sodre were held in a cordial atmosphere of understanding, and that international issues were analyzed from the political and economic viewpoints. The two ministers also analyzed the promotion of bilateral relations. The communique states that Abreu Sodre accepted an invitation to visit Israel.

Sarney Views Fiscal Package, Reform Plans

PY152038 Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 14 Dec 87 p 2

[Text] Brasilia—President Jose Sarney yesterday stated that the government fiscal package will not interfere with his personal goal of aiding wage earners. He also promised measures to reduce tax evasion by the rich. The president said he wants to eliminate loopholes that allow large-scale tax evasion.

Sarney made these remarks during an informal talk aboard the presidential plane that brought him back to Brasilia from Rio de Janeiro. He was talking about reforms and the implementation of administrative plans and projects he intends to complete by the end of his term in office. Sarney stressed his main objectives in the administrative, political, and economic sectors, including the construction, at any cost, of the north-south railway.

The north-south railroad is included in the investment plan for central Brazil, and the president feels it is so essential that he intends to start the project at both ends, using an Army engineering battalion for support beginning in January 1988.

He stated: "I am going to build the railroad by starting at both ends, and in January I am going to place an Army engineering battalion in the middle."

In the economic sector, the president said he intends to establish acceptable levels of economic growth regarding salaries and inflation.

Sarney said the failure of the cruzado plan caused a lowering of purchasing power relative to salaries and resulted in an increased inflation rate. It also caused a drop in growth, which had reached 8.8 percent; however, Sarney expressed the hope that growth would reach 5 percent at the end of the year.

The president denied any hesitation in the implementation of a broader administrative reform and said the career program for public servants has been drawn up, the administration school is ready to be inaugurated, and many organizations—among which he mentioned INCRA [National Institute of Land Reform and Settlement] and the BNH [National Housing Bank]—have been dissolved. He confirmed that he is going to implement the public servants' career program through a decree-law because he believes it cannot wait until Congress resumes its activities.

Sarney said he has not exhausted all the measures to achieve administrative reform, but hinted that he will only be able to complete the reform when it is known what form of government the Constituent Assembly will choose.

Sarney said he will try to leave everything organized in all sectors.

Bresser Submits Studies on Fiscal Measures

PY160227 Rio de Janeiro Rede Globo Television 2200 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Text] President Sarney has confirmed that the fiscal package will be approved this week. Today, Finance Minister Bresser Pereira submitted to the president the studies on the new fiscal measures.

Minister Bresser today came to Alborada Palace determined to prove that an increase in taxes and cuts in government spending are essential for the Brazilian economy next year. The minister's closest advisers said that Bresser's continuation as head of the Finance Ministry depends on the approval of the fiscal package for implementation next year. The discussion with the president lasted 3 and 1/2 hours.

[Begin Bresser recording] The basic ideas had already been approved by the president because he followed the drafting of the package from the very beginning. He was informed about the fine details today. [end recording]

Minister Bresser Pereira delivered to the president a 20-page summary of the package and the text of 10 decrees and 1 decree-law that will be submitted to Congress. President Sarney will begin studying the new package tonight. One of the measures has already been approved by the president: the measure that reduces by 7 percent income taxes retained by employers.

[Begin Sarney recording] We discussed the new measures at length with the experts and advisers. I am carefully reviewing each of the new measures, and I expect to have a decision by tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. [end recording]

Bresser Pereira does not have an agreement on all the measures. He declined to answer when asked whether he could convince the president to approve the whole package.

Bresser on Modifying Debt Negotiation System

PY151437 Brasilia Radio Nacional da Amazonia Network in Portuguese 0900 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Text] Yesterday, at the opening session of the Latin American Parliamentary Assembly for the Foreign Debt, Finance Minister Luiz Carlos Bresser Pereira defended further integration among the debtor countries and suggested modifying the current negotiation system.

[Begin recording] [Bresser] I believe we made great progress this year; (?there is greater uniformity of concept). For example, the businessmen's awareness of the seriousness of the foreign debt issue increased extraordinarily this year. The government also has unified criteria regarding this issue. However, there is much to be done yet.

There are certain sectors of society that still think an agreement with the IMF is all that is needed to solve the foreign debt problem. (?This is what I would like) to do; however, I am sorry to say that that does not solve anything.

As long as we do not adopt a unified position concerning this issue and work with determination to obtain a discount with regard to the foreign debt; that is, a reduction in the foreign debt, we will not be able to solve the foreign debt (?problem). In such an event, we will have enormous difficulties with economic (?development), price stability, and inflation in the country.

[Reporter] Have you advocated modifying the negotiation system?

[Bresser] Not really; I mean, I will leave that for later. We are carrying out negotiations. I said that this is an extremely slow process which has not (?worked out) well. I talked about this issue with several representatives; that is, bankers who are members of the creditor committee, and they also share my point of view, which is that this system based on a creditor committee is not effective.

Now, we will continue negotiations with the creditor committee until 15 January. I hope that by then we will reach an agreement. [end recording]

Minister Bresser added that the foreign debt problem has brought Latin America to a standstill, with zero per capita income growth since 1975.

Budget, Finance Secretary Releases Budget
PY160050 Brasilia Domestic Service in Portuguese 2100 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Text] Budget and Finance Secretary Marcio Dias Moreira, who today released the budget for 1988, said that in 1988 the public deficit should reach 2 percent of the GNP, which means a reduction of 420 billion cruzados in government spending compared with previous estimates.

A major change is the centralization of accounts, which will increase funds for federal spending. The 1988 budget was readjusted by 128 percent with respect to the 1987 budget, adopting the inflation prospects as estimated by the government. At first, the Budget and Finance Secretariat expected a 60-percent readjustment in the 1988 budget, but this index was changed because of the recent adjustments of the economy. The adjustments by the government have permitted the reduction of the public deficit to the 2-percent figure estimated in the budget. In 1986, the deficit reached 3.7 percent of the GNP. For the end of 1987, the Finance Ministry expects a 4.9-percent deficit.

In the 1988 budget, the government will once again have a contingency reserve, which is a fund that serves to compensate for unscheduled expenses, and which had been reduced in the past few years. This year the reserve was only 0.25 percent of the budget, but next year it will rise to 4 percent.

Chile

Liberal Party Approves Merger With Republicans
PY160223 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 9 Dec 87 p C-3

[Text] The national council of the Liberal Party [PL] early yesterday approved a merger with the Republican Party and designated the leaders who will hold 50 percent of the posts in the executive board and the political commission of the new party, which will be called "Republican Liberal Union" [Union Liberal Republicana— ULR].

The top PL organ also approved, although with three minor observations, the alternative government program designed by the parties of the Democratic Alliance, the Padena [National Democratic Party], and the Humanists. The observations deal with the defense of the schools that have been transferred to municipal jurisdiction, with the demand that the Codeco [expansion unknown] and Codere [expansion unknown] be given financial independence, and with AFP [retirement fund] worker control over AFP-owned property.

The ULR executive board will be made up of 10 members. The Liberal members are: Guillermo Toro (vice president), Pedro Esquivel (vice president), Pedro Montenegro (vice president), Ricardo Bustos (assistant secretary), and Sergio Trucco (treasurer); the presidency, two vice presidencies, and the general secretariat of the ULR will be held by Republican leaders [nine positions as published].

The above leaders will be members of the ULR political commission, which will also be made up of leader Juan Daricarrere, Claudio Cerda, Federico Errazuriz, Carmen Craig, Julio Villa, Arturo Brand, and Alberto Fuentes.

Concerning the Party for Democracy [PPD], the PL decided to take joint action with the Social Democratic Party, the People's Socialist Union, the Padena, and the Republicans "in order to preserve the interests of each of the parties that will make up the new party."

It was also decided that no party will have predominance within the PPD, and that each party should have the same number of delegates to the executive board and the general council of the PPD.

Two Political Parties Officially Recognized
PY150256 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 2200 GMT 14 Dec 87

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] The official gazette today published an article that officially established the National Renewal Party [Renovacion Nacional—RN] and the National Vanguard Party [Avanzada Nacional—AN] in compliance with the terms of the Party Registration Law.

Budget Director Cited on World Bank Loan
PY160213 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 2200 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Excerpts] The World Bank board has approved the third stage of a $250-million loan to Chile. Most of the countries comprising the board voted for the loan.

This information was confirmed in Chile by Budget Director Jorge Selume, who said the loan will be paid to Chile in two installments, one at the end of 1987 and the other at the end of 1988.

This credit is known in Chile as a SAL—Structural Readjustment Loan. The loan was subdivided in accordance with a program agreed upon by Chile and the World Bank. Chile has 17 years to pay back the loan, with a 4-year grace period. [passage omitted]

According to Selume, the cycle of SAL loans was successfully concluded with the obtaining of this last credit. The goals established in 1985, when the agreement for the overall $750-million credit was signed, have been surpassed as a result of modifications made to it. [passage omitted]

Selume also said it will not be necessary to sign other agreements to obtain similar credits because the country is now experiencing a situation different from that of 1985, and the national economy has been consolidated.

Regarding the effects of this loan on foreign investments in Chile, Selume said this loan shows that the banks trust Chile, and investments in the country will continue as in the last few years.

FRG Delegation To Visit German Colony

PY141308 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 0930 GMT 14 Dec 87

[Text] A delegation of FRG citizens headed by Johannes Marre, former FRG ambassador to Uruguay, arrived in Santiago yesterday. The group is comprised of eight persons, including Bishop of Essen Emil Stehle, representatives from the FRG Justice Ministry, and a psychologist. They will visit Dignidad Colony, located in Parral.

Although they did not wish to be questioned by the media, the Germans said they will first meet with FRG Ambassador to Chile Horst Kullak-Ublick to obtain first-hand information about alleged irregular procedures in the Dignidad Colony.

A few days ago, the Chilean Foreign Ministry announced that the delegation would be accepted in Chile as tourists, and not as an investigative commission, because if an illegal procedure were discovered in Dignidad Colony, Chilean justice would have to take charge of the case.

Colony Opposes Visit

PY152243 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0457 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Excerpts] Santiago, 14 Dec (EFE)—German national Herman Schmidt, president of the "Dignidad Colony," tonight told a Chilean television station they will not receive the FRG commission of experts sent by the FRG Foreign Ministry.

During an exclusive interview with the Santiago Catholic University television station, Schmidt said the commission "is intruding in Chilean internal matters because our colony operates under Chilean laws, and neither a foreigner nor a commission representing a foreign government can intrude in its affairs."

Schmidt, speaking in fluent Spanish, added that if they allowed the investigative commission to enter the Dignidad Colony "we would be taking a position against the Chilean Government, and we do not see any reason to do that." [passage omitted]

Gerdts Michael, spokesman of the FRG delegation, told the Chilean media at Santiago international airport that "we want to build confidence by not saying anything because we think that is the only way we will be allowed to enter the Dignidad Colony. I wish our presence had gone unnoticed." [passage omitted]

Foreign Ministry Reorganization Postponed

PY160114 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 10 Dec 87 p C-2

[Text] The post of deputy foreign minister has been extended for another year, according to a decree published in the official gazette. Originally, and according to the reorganization that was supposed to take place within the ministries, this post was to have been abolished on 5 December. However, a Foreign Ministry request to maintain this post for another year in order to reorganize this government sector was accepted.

Brigadier General Francisco Ramirez, who currently holds the post of deputy foreign minister, yesterday said that although this post still exists it is up to the president of the Republic to decide who will hold it in the future.

The Army has appointed Gen Ramirez commander of the engineering and military industry command.

Colombia

New Peace, Rehabilitation Adviser Appointed

PA151948 Bogota Invravision Television Cadena 2 in Spanish 1730 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Text] Rafael Pardo, new presidential adviser for peace and rehabilitation, will take office tomorrow. His first action will involve signing a contract for the construction of the Chaparral aqueduct in Tolima Department. Now let us see who Rafael Pardo is:

The new adviser for peace and rehabilitation is a 34-year-old economist from the Univeristy of the Andes. He worked in the university's research department for 8 years and then began working in the People's Integration Secretariat of the Colombian Presidency in September 1986, where he stayed until his new appointment. He will continue the same policy of Carlos Ossa Escobar. He is familiar with this policy, because he made several trips with the adviser.

[Begin recording] [Pardo] The government is willing to talk with any group that wishes to accept the policy of dialogue and its principles. It is willing to do so separately with each group or with FARC.

[Reporter] What if this is done on behalf of the Guerrilla Coordinating Board?

[Pardo] The meeting of the Coordinating Board has not changed the government's policy. The government has its doors open to a dialogue as long as they stop their terrorist actions and their attacks on the Armed Forces and on towns.

[Reporter] Have they approached you?

[Pardo] No, not yet. [end recording]

Guerrillas Briefly Seize Santander Town

PA152003 Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 2 in Spanish 1730 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Text] [Announcer] This morning, our reporter visited Puerto Wilches, Santander Department, which had been seized by guerrillas. The action began at approximately 2300 yesterday and ended at approximately 0400 today. Our reporter, Carlos Alirio Meneses, is still in the area, and he will recount what happened and describe the current situation:

[Meneses] We are still in the middle Magdalena River region. At about 2200, approximately 100 men seized the town of Puerto Wilches, which is 1 hour from Barrancabermeja. It is located on the banks of the Magdalena River. There is still a tense situation here. Troops of the Nueva Granada Battalion from Barrancabermeja are in the area. General Alfonso Vacas Perilla, who arrived in Puerto Wilches, said that troops of the Nueva Granada Battalion and from the Palloa garrison have been deployed to this area. Part of the police headquarters was destroyed, and a policeman was wounded; he has already been taken to the Barrancabermeja polyclinic. At this time, the people are still in the streets, afraid of new attacks. However, the authorities have said they are guaranteeing the people's security.

[Announcer] It was said the guerrillas sustained casualties. Is this true?

[Meneses] There were reports they had sustained four casualties, but we were unable to confirm this. When speaking with the townspeople, they denied these reports. The wounding of the policeman is the only thing we can confirm. The situation is calm. Troops continue to be deployed by air and land. We were able to see that Army toops have been deployed to pursue the 100 guerrillas of the National Guerrilla Coordinating Board, who seized this important Santander town for more than 5 hours.

Briefs

Guerrilla Leader Killed

Luis Baena Suarez (alias Guillermo Martinez), commander of the FARC 13th Front, was killed during the past few hours in a mountainous region of Belen de los Andaquies municipality. He had been wounded in skirmishes with the police after the occupation of San Jose municipality. This is a harsh blow to FARC, because Luis Enrique Prieto Garcia (alias Avelino Medina), commander of the FARC 15th Front, was recently arrested in Bogota after attacks perpetrated against military units in Caqueta. [Summary] *[Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 2 Dec 87 p 2a PA]*

Paraguay

Dissident Colorado Faction Meeting Banned

PY141301 Asuncion HOY in Spanish 13 Dec 87 p 14

[Text] A very impressive deployment of police yesterday morning prevented a meeting of the Ethic and Doctrinary faction of the Colorado Party. The meeting was to have been held in the downtown Plaza de los Heroes and the faction's leaders had planned to launch their national campaign in support of blank voting in the upcoming elections.

Very early in the morning police totally cordoned off the plaza where the meeting was to have taken place, thus preventing anyone from entering. It must be pointed out that for some time now this Colorado Party faction has implemented an intensive publicity campaign against the president, General Alfredo Stroessner, remaining in the Presidency. This faction also does not recognize Stroessner as the party's candidate, because they consider that the party convention which nominated him was "the outcome of an assault" against the convention of the board of directors of the ANR [National Republican Association].

After the banning of the meeting was made known, its organizers reaffirmed that they will continue with their campaign in support of blank voting.

Police Detain Ypacarai Colorado Party Youths

PY141342 Asuncion HOY in Spanish 13 Dec 87 p 15

[Text] Luis Becker, a national deputy and president of the intervened Ypacarai Colorado Party precinct, on 12 December denounced the detention of several Colorado Party youths. After being held for some hours at the Ypacarai Police Station, the young people were taken to Police Headquarters in Asuncion where they remain incommunicado, according to the congressman.

According to information, the following people have been detained: Miguel Angel Zimmerlis Alcaraz, Pablo Flores Battilana, Adrian Ortega Gianotti, Ramon Salinas, Ramon Dominguez, Jose Mendieta, Adriano Adorno, and Juan Domingo Gonzalez.

When Becker was consulted about the motives of the police roundup, he maintained that "it was carried out within the framework of the many repressive measures that the regime is implementing against Ypacarai and the Paraguayan people in general."

The congressman also stated that the incident "is another attempt by the dictatorship to try and lower the guard of the combative people of Ypacarai, who will not rest until a democratic and pluralist government is achieved in Paraguay. Come what may, we will continue with the struggle. Ypacarai is a town of brave people who will never lower their guard before any tyrant," he stated.

Finally, the grasroots leader reported that the detentions took place at the end of a football game at the 24 de Mayo stadium, when the young people started to shout "hurrahs" for the Colorado Party and slogans "of repudiation against the regime."

Court Orders Extradition of Argentine Couple

Asuncion LA TARDE in Spanish 11 Dec 87 p 12

[Excerpts] This morning, Judge Eladio Duarte Carvallo "ordered the extradition of Norberto Atilio Bianco and his wife, Alicia Susana Wherli de Bianco," which has been requested by the Argentine courts for months. The Biancos are charged with the seizure and removal of two 10-year-old minors, the children of persons who disappeared during Argentina's "dirty war."

In his final ruling, the judge said the extradition request cannot be considered to be politically motivated as contended by the Biancos' defense lawyer. The judge further noted in his ruling that the fact that the man whose extradition has been requested was an Army officer does not justify the defense lawyer's contention. [passage omitted]

Judge Duarte Carvallo only ruled on the extradition of the Bianco couple. As for the two minors, whose return is also requested by the Argentine courts, the case will have to be decided in the juvenile court, where a petition to that effect has also been filed. [passage omitted]

Briefs

Trade Figures Released

According to the General Directorate of Customs, Brazil with 14.7 percent, Argentina with 14.4 percent, and The Netherlands with 12.8 percent, have been the main purchasers of Paraguayan products. Of the total of $337 million that have been invoiced for exports between January and November, $140 cover sales made to these three countries. [Excerpt] *[Asuncion HOY in Spanish 9 Dec 87 p 15 PY]*